

# HYPERALLERGIC

## Geometric Abstraction in the Age of Disparity

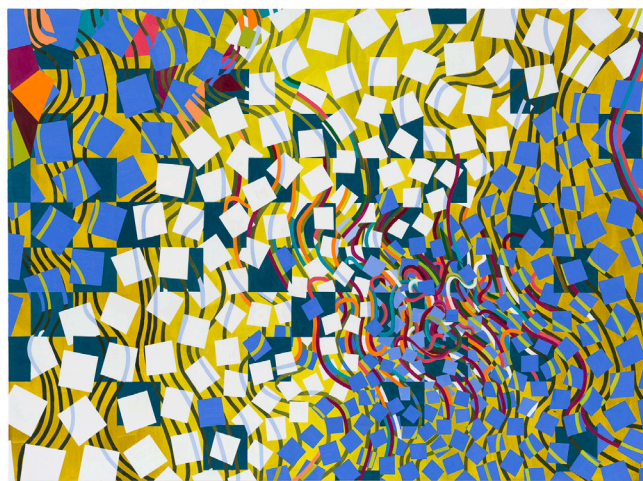
*Lisa Corinne Davis has stretched the possibilities of painting into a territory defined by digital systems, algorithms, flow charts, and diagrams.*

16 September 2025 | By John Yau

Five years ago, I reviewed Lisa Corinne Davis's exhibition "All Shook Up" at the now-closed Pamela Salisbury Gallery in Hudson, New York. Davis's geometric abstractions zeroed in on the tangle of systems and networks shaping our lives. At the time, I felt that the different structural arrangements, and their interrelationships, didn't snap together with enough force. Whatever qualms I had about Davis's work were laid to rest with her current exhibition, "Syllogism", at Miles McEnery Gallery.

What was apparent in the earlier work, and is far more convincing and exciting now, is that Davis has stretched the possibilities of geometric abstraction into a territory defined by digital systems, algorithms, flow charts, and diagrams — a visual realm that alludes to the measurement and prediction of our behavior. She has achieved this by developing a vocabulary made up of distinct abstract languages, each one composed of similar colors and based on repeating units, which include open, unstable grids; various geometric shapes; lines and bands; and puzzle-like shapes. Working almost exclusively in oil on canvas, Davis layers one open system over another, making sure no one dominates, as they disrupt and infiltrate each other. The figure/ground relationship is nuanced and contentious, as multiple systems vie for our attention.

How are we to read these paintings, and the many pleasures they convey? That's what keeps me looking at them: They welcome myriad narratives without ever settling into a single storyline. Do we read them biographically? Are they connected to maps? Do they comment on our collective dependency on computers? Are they political statements about the comforts of



Convulsive Calculation, 2025, Oil on canvas, 72 x 100 inches.

Courtesy the artist and Miles McEnery Gallery, New York, NY.

Image by JSP Art Photography.

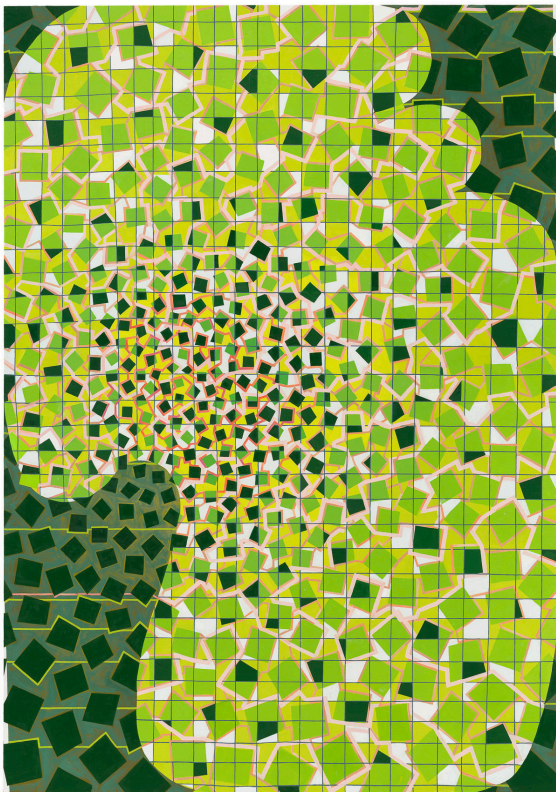


Dogmatic Deceit, 2025, Oil on canvas, 80 x 60 inches.

identifying with an ideology? Does the title of one painting, *Dogmatic Deceit*, inspire many

associations at once? Whatever your response, it is amply clear to me that Davis has made geometric abstraction germane to our swiftly changing, downward spiraling times, and that is no small accomplishment.

While these are slow, inviting paintings, they are teeming with activity on every level. Look at all the different strategies that Davis incorporates into *Convulsive Calculation* (all works 2025). Working with rectangles and wavy lines that might recall Sol LeWitt's use of them beginning in the mid-'90s, Davis composes a complex, layered domain unlike anything else I've seen in current abstraction. With some inexplicable exceptions, the rectangles can be divided into three color groups — white, cerulean blue, and dark greenish blue — set against a green-yellow ground that changes almost imperceptibly.



*Notional Adage*, 2025, Oil on canvas, 90 x 65 inches.

The dark rectangles, parallel to the painting's edges, function as a visual anchor amid the hubbub of wavy lines and smaller cerulean and white rectangles that overlay them at different angles. Are the densely packed cerulean rectangles rushing up or sliding down from the lower right-hand corner? Is the wide, diagonal swath of white ones rushing to meet them or moving away? How do the larger cerulean shapes, forming a triangle in the upper left-hand corner and cordoning off the white ones, fit into the overall composition?

We can see the action, but we do not know what it means. This is what I find so compelling about Davis' work: She shows us a world we know exists but seldom see up close, a beautiful, multicolored system populated by geometric shapes, lines, and grids — all of which are familiar and don't usually feel threatening. In *Convulsive Calculation*, however, everything is verging on incoherence and information overload; we are on the cusp of chaos.

I am reminded of the opening lines of William Wordsworth's poem "The World Is Too Much With Us":

The world is too much with us; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;—  
Little we see in Nature that is ours;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!

Slow to reveal themselves and meticulously made, Davis's paradoxical paintings speak to our age of simultaneous information overload and disparity, where the gap between language and meaning, and rich and poor, increases by the hour.





*Fleeting Form*, 2025, Acrylic and oil on canvas 80 x 60 inches.



*Temporal Terrain*, 2025, Oil on canvas, 80 x 60 inches.



New York, NY: Miles McEnery Gallery, "Lisa Corinne Davis: Syllogism," 4 September - 25 October 2025.

**Lisa Corinne Davis: Syllogism continues at Miles McEnery Gallery (525 West 22nd Street, Chelsea, Manhattan) through October 25.** The exhibition was organized by the gallery.